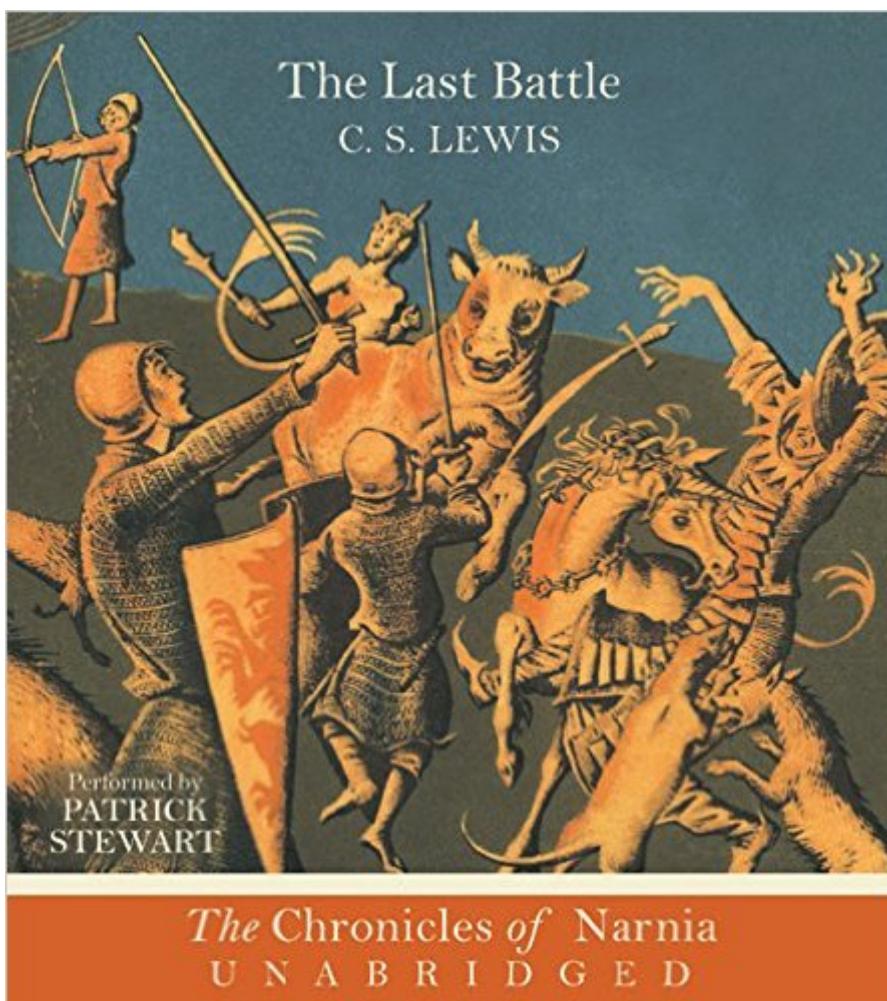


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The Last Battle (Narnia)



Synopsis

NARNIA...where lies breed fear...where loyalty is tested... where all hope seems lost. During the last days of Narnia, the land faces its fiercest challenge - not an invader from without but an enemy from within. Lies and treachery have taken root, and only the king and a small band of loyal followers can prevent the destruction of all they hold dear in this, the magnificent ending to The Chronicles of Narnia.

Book Information

Series: Narnia (Book 7)

Audio CD

Publisher: HarperCollins Narnia; Unabridged edition (June 28, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0060597828

ISBN-13: 978-0060597825

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.7 x 5.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ [See all reviewsÂ \(727 customer reviews\)](#)

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Customer Reviews

The second volume of the Narnia Chronicles closed with the possibility of Lucy and Edmund -- though not their older siblings -- returning to Narnia. "The Voyage of the Dawn Treader" makes good on that story, with the intrepid pair (plus a whiny cousin) returning on a strange sea voyage. After the events of "Prince Caspian," Lucy and Edmund are sent off to stay with their obnoxious cousin Eustace. But when they admire a picture of a strange ship, suddenly all three kids are sucked in -- and land in a Narnian sea. On board the ship is King Caspian, now fully grown, who is determined to find a bunch of knights exiled by his murderous uncle, even if he has to go to the edge of the world (literally). Lucy and Edmund are thrilled to be back in Narnia again, but Eustace proceeds to make trouble any way he can, complaining and causing trouble among the crew. But there are problems more horrifying than any of them can guess, from dragons to sinister "gold water" to a region filled with their worst nightmares. "The Voyage of the Dawn Treader" is one of Lewis's most original and tightly-written Narnian adventures. It's also a bit of a break from form.

After two books of battles against evil tyrants, "Voyage" simply goes where no man/woman/mouse has gone before, and gives us a view of the Narnian world as more than one isolated little region. And in some ways, it's also the darkest Chronicle. Lewis explores the theme of greed here -- greed for power, beauty, money and magic -- and has some scenes both chilling and majestic. But his archly humorous style peeks through in several places, whether it's pompous mouse Reepicheep or tea with a reclusive old wizard. Edmund and Lucy are their usual plucky selves, albeit a bit more mature than before.

I have put off reviewing "The Voyage of the Dawn Treader" for a long time. There is no other book I have so longed to recommend to others, but I have felt (and still feel) totally inadequate when it comes to expressing what a wonderful story this is. I could go on for days about all the wonderful things contained here. That said, I will try and focus on only a few aspects of this book and then plead with you to read it. First, I must note that I feel this story should be read in the context of the entire Narnian series. It stands on its own nicely enough, but the deep background of the previous tales adds richness and texture to the tale. Secondly, I must note that this book is highly enjoyable because it works on two levels. The tale as a whole is the story of a journey into unknown lands. With each new place they visit, the whole is broken into wonderful episodes. My favorite episode (with the exception of the ending) is the island where dreams come true...it's not what one would expect. The character of Eustace is my favorite of all the humans in the Narnian books. This story is partly a tale of his transformation. This seems to be a universal human desire; but Eustace, like all who truly seek transformation must, finds impossible to reform himself. This is an especially timely lesson for our "self-help" culture at the beginning of the twenty-first century. This brings me to what I like best of "The Voyage of the Dawn Treader." Let me preface what I say here by making it clear that no one hates heavy-handed use of allegory as much as I do. However, the allegory that is "The Voyage of the Dawn Treader" is one of the greatest things of beauty I have ever encountered. In one form or another we are all questing after an unseen kingdom.

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